UNITED
NATIONS

S

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1997/794
14 October 1997

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 14 OCTOBER 1997 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to convey the attached communication, dated 9 October 1997, which I have received from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

I should be grateful if you would bring it to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Kofi A. ANNAN

97-27251 (E) 151097 161097

/...

Annex

Letter dated 9 October 1997 from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization addressed to the Secretary-General

In accordance with Security Council resolution 1088 (1996), I attach the ninth monthly report on Stabilization Force operations. I would appreciate your making this report available to the Security Council.

(Signed) Javier SOLANA

Appendix

Ninth monthly report to the United Nations Security Council on SFOR operations

SFOR operations

1. Approximately 39,000 SFOR troops are currently deployed in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, with contributions from all members of NATO and from 20 non-NATO nations. Over the reporting period (21 August-20 September), the number of troops in theatre increased because of the support provided to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) during the preparations for, and conduct of, the municipal elections, which took place on 13 and 14 September.

2. SFOR continued to conduct surveillance and reconnaissance by means of ground and air patrols. Over the reporting period 2,950 sorties were flown by combat aircraft, with the SFOR helicopter fleet flying a total of 102 hours.

3. Support continues to be provided to the United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (UNTAES), with SFOR maintaining its regular, coordinated training missions over Eastern Slavonia in order to exercise plans to provide close air support if necessary.

4. Over the reporting period, there have been continuing signs of tension within the Republika Srpska and a number of clashes, reported in more detail below, between Republika Srpska crowds and SFOR troops. In addition, in late August, the pro-Pale Serb media launched a propaganda campaign against SFOR in Brcko which threatened to jeopardize stability within Bosnia and Herzegovina. In response to a request from the High Representative, SFOR was authorized to assist in curtailing or suspending media programming if required.

5. On 28 August, near Brcko, a group of approximately 70 Bosnian Serb civilians attacked SFOR personnel manning a traffic control point. The SFOR personnel were moved by armoured vehicles towards the Brcko Bridge. A group of around 400 Bosnian Serb civilians started following the troops towards the bridge, where Bosnian Serb police and the International Police Task Force (IPTF) attempted to contain the situation. Over the next few hours, the crowd at the bridge grew to approximately 1,400 people. Sticks, stones and Molotov cocktails were thrown at the SFOR troops, who responded by using riot control gas. By mid-afternoon of 29 August, the situation had calmed down and the crowd around the bridge dispersed.

6. In the afternoon of 1 September, approximately 170 Bosnian Serbs gathered near the Udrigovo radio television tower near Uglejvik complaining about the lack of broadcasts into the Brcko area. Later, two civilian buses with some 100 people headed towards Uglejvik, with another group of 100 people heading towards the television tower. Stones were thrown at the SFOR soldiers, who had deployed to the area as a result of the disturbances throughout the Republika Srpska. By mid-afternoon, approximately 200 people had gathered near the tower, and a wire barrier was constructed by the SFOR troops between themselves and the crowd. Following low-level flights by SFOR above the area and instructions to leave

relayed by aerial loud speakers, the crowd calmed down and subsequently dispersed. SFOR units remained in the close vicinity of the television tower until 5 September. Since then, SFOR has been conducting patrols nearby, in accordance with an agreement with the Republika Srpska authorities in Pale on 2 September.

7. On 6 September, the Banja Luka Public Security Centre announced that all public gatherings in the town would be banned from 7 to 11 September, thereby prohibiting a Serbian Democratic Party (SDS) rally which had been scheduled for 8 September. The Banja Luka chapter of SDS announced plans to go ahead in any event and on 8 September buses from the east and south-eastern parts of the Republika Srpska left for the rally. SFOR monitored the buses' movements and checked them for weapons by setting up traffic control points along the main routes to Banja Luka. A total of 54 buses were monitored en route to Banja Luka by the evening of 8 September. They were stopped at SFOR and civil police roadblocks outside Banja Luka and all eventually turned around and left by the early hours of 9 September. The following morning, however, it became apparent that three senior Republika Srpska politicians (Messrs. Kijac, Krajisnik and Klikovic) were trapped in a hotel in Banja Luka surrounded by a hostile crowd of between 300 and 1,000 people. IPTF and local police, with SFOR support, escorted some of the party from the hotel to be questioned by representatives of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. They were all then released. The three politicians remained at the hotel during this time. President Krajisnik eventually left in the early evening of 9 September, heckled by crowds and escorted by two Republika Srpska cars.

8. On 17 September, a Ukrainian MI-8 helicopter flying for the United Nations crashed near Fojnica. SFOR dispatched four medical evacuation helicopters and one tactical command post helicopter to the scene. Twelve passengers were killed, among them Deputy High Representative Gerd Wagner and Deputy IPTF Commissioner David Kriskovich. The four crew members survived and were transported to the SFOR hospital at Rajlovak. Following the crash, SFOR forces provided security at the location. The United Nations is leading the crash investigation.

9. On 18 September a car bomb exploded outside a police station in West Mostar. Twenty-six people were injured and cars and buildings in the surrounding area were damaged. An investigation into the explosion is currently being conducted by Mostar Cantonal authorities, assisted by Federation authorities and under the supervision of IPTF.

Cooperation and compliance by the parties

10. The Parties remain generally compliant with most military aspects of the Peace Agreement across the whole area of operations. Despite the political tension in the Republika Srpska, the overall situation in theatre remains calm. SFOR continues to ensure a secure environment in accordance with the Peace Agreement. The programme for the reduction of cantonment sites is on schedule, freedom of movement has improved and compliance with countermine operations is generally good.

11. In line with the policy communicated to the Entity Presidents by the SFOR Commander on 7 August (see S/1997/718, annex, appendix, para. 4), SFOR has continued to enforce the compliance of the Specialist Police Units with annex 1A of the General Framework Agreement for Peace and has begun to limit their capabilities. Federation Specialist Police forces are generally compliant. As regards the Republika Srpska Specialist Police, the SFOR Deputy Commander for Operations met the Commander of the Republika Srpska police Anti-Terrorist Brigade, General Saric and the new Republika Srpska Minister of the Interior, Mr. Paleksic, on 3 September to discuss the lack of compliance with the supplementary instructions for the Specialist Police (chapter 12 of instructions of the SFOR Deputy Commander for Operations to the parties). Both indicated that they were willing to comply and would provide the necessary information by 8 September. Following the meeting, the Deputy Commander for Operations ordered a training and movement ban on all Republika Srpska Specialist Police units not in compliance with the supplementary instructions. Since the Anti-Terrorist Brigade remained non-compliant. The Deputy Commander for Operations, on 11 September, sent letters to General Saric and Mr. Paleksic summarizing the outstanding non-compliance issues and highlighting that Specialist Police had been deployed in Banja Luka on 9 September. The letters also provided the necessary direction for corrective action. Full compliance has not yet been achieved, but there has been progress.

12. During the reporting period, SFOR inspected 479 military weapons storage sites: 178 Bosniac; 146 Bosnian Croat; 2 Federation; and 153 Bosnian Serb. In addition, SFOR supported the weapon inspection campaign conducted by IPTF at local police facilities of both entities. This operation lasted 18 days, from 24 August to 10 September and 125 civil police stations were inspected: 52 from the Federation and 73 from the Republika Srpska. Forty-two civil police units showed discrepancies. Of these, 23 were Federation and 19 were Republika Srpska. The following weapons in excess of the quantity and type specified were confiscated by SFOR: from the Federation: 93 grenades; 17 anti-personnel mines; 14 anti-tank mines; 241 long-barrelled weapons; 4 rifles; 4 M-80s; 5 pistols; 1 rocket-propelled grenade; and 3 sub-machine guns; and from the Republika Srpska: 170 grenades; 2 anti-personnel mines; 8 anti-tank mines; 104 long-barrelled weapons; 15 rifles; 2 M-80s; 15 pistols; and 6 rocket-propelled grenades.

13. A number of minor discrepancies were discovered during the SFOR inspection of weapons storage sites over the reporting period, and the following weapons confiscated: from the Bosnian Croats, six AK 47 rifles, one grenade launcher, three small arms and 112 x 7.62 rounds of ammunition; from the Bosnian Serbs, one AK 47 rifle and 3 x 60 mm mortars; and from the Bosniacs, none. In accordance with SFOR policy, after a period of time to allow for appeals, all these confiscated weapons will be destroyed.

14. Over the reporting period, two illegal check points were dismantled, both in the Republika Srpska. On 30 August, Republika Srpska police were observed demanding 50 DM each from two individuals to cross the Brcko bridge. IPTF intervened and the Republika Srpska police complied with their demand to desist. On the same day, the Deputy High Representative in Brcko, Ambassador Farrand, issued a supervisory order instructing Republika Srpska police authorities immediately to halt the practice of charging visa fees for vehicles crossing the

Brcko Bridge from Croatia. Ambassador Farrand also demanded that all activities by Republika Srpska police and customs authorities related to the collection of road toll charges at the bridge be stopped without delay. On 13 September, a SFOR patrol and IPTF dismantled an illegal check point at Trnovo police station, set up by 5 Republika Srpska policemen. There was no resistance. Overall, the SFOR/IPTF checkpoint policy continues to improve freedom of movement. IPTF, with SFOR support, are pursuing their objective of reducing the number of human rights violations by monitoring the daily activity of the local police, accompanying regular police on patrol and reporting on the application of the law.

15. In late August, Republika Srpska President Plavsic agreed to bring the Republika Srpska police under the jurisdiction of the IPTF certification and restructuring programme. Approximately 800 police, primarily in the Banja Luka area, have entered the IPTF programme.

16. During the reporting period, SFOR monitored a total of 532 training and movement activities: 269 by the Bosniacs; 131 by the Bosnian Croats; and 132 by the Bosnian Serbs. During the period of the municipal elections, all movement and training activities were banned for all Entity Armed Forces from 8 to 21 September. The ban also applied to air activities and the call up of reserves. The only exceptions related to the countermine campaign, weapons reductions being carried out under the auspices of OSCE and site reductions in accordance with the 25 per cent reduction plan. On the election days (13 and 14 September), all Entity Armies were continued to barracks.

17. Over the reporting period, Entity personnel, under SFOR supervision, removed 3,510 explosive devices from 292 mined areas: 349 anti-tank mines; 2,849 anti-personnel mines; and 312 items of unexploded ordnance. This marks the best monthly performance ever reported. In general, compliance has improved considerably over recent months, and no training and movement bans have been imposed since 7 September. Bans were however in effect until 21 September for non-compliance with the countermining guidance. These bans were placed on the movement and training of the third and fifth VRS corps in Multi-National Division (North) and on the fifth VRS corps in Multi-National Division (South East).

18. On 19 August, a meeting of the Inter-Entity Boundary Line Sub-Commission took place in Lukavica, when the parties agreed on the exchange of the village of Dobocani (to the Federation) for the village of Koprivna (to the Republika Srpska). The ratification of this Agreement is pending.

19. On 26 August, there was a meeting of the Joint Military Commission at SFOR headquarters. The main issues discussed were the power struggle in the Republika Srpska, the de-mining process, cantonment sites and the handing over of prisoners of war. With respect to prisoners of war, the Entity Army commanders were asked to ensure that there were no prisoner of war detainees in any facility for which they were responsible. The Commanders' written confirmation is still awaited.

20. Since the implementation of the Peace Agreement, approximately 1,100 prisoners of war have been released under the auspices of the International

Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). ICRC is currently assessing the conditions of detention and treatment of people belonging to minority ethnic groups detained by another ethnic group (referred to as common-law detainees) and persons accused or sentenced for war crimes. As of August, the persons belonging to this latter category numbered less than 20.

Cooperation with international organizations

21. Within its capabilities, SFOR continues to offer assistance to the international organizations in theatre. As noted above, SFOR continues to provide security to IPTF in its inspections of specialist police units, with the aim of bringing these latter into compliance with annex 1A of the Peace Agreement.

22. Increased support has also been provided to the Office of the High Representative, notably during the Banja Luka incident detailed in paragraph 7 above, when prompt action by SFOR and the Office of the High Representative defused a potentially critical situation. In addition, SFOR and the Office of the High Representative continued negotiations with the parties with a view to reaching agreement on aviation matters. On 11 September, after considerable pressure, the Council of Ministers signed the agreement on the Department of Civil Aviation. The memorandum of understanding for the opening up of the regional airports of Banja Luka, Mostar and Tuzla was subsequently signed on 12 September during the visit to Sarajevo by the NATO Secretary-General. Work is now proceeding apace with a view to certifying the regional airports and to opening them up to civilian traffic.

23. SFOR continues to support international agencies promoting the expansion of alternative media, and assists both the Office of the High Representative and OSCE in expanding the Open Broadcast Network and the Free Elections Radio Network. Additionally, SFOR is a key participant in the various international community media organizations.

24. SFOR provided significant security and logistical support to the OSCE during the conduct of the municipal elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina on 13 and 14 September. In part because of the increased SFOR presence, the overall situation in the theatre remained generally calm. Operations proceeded smoothly, even although there were some cases of isolated violence. As planned, SFOR supported the municipal elections with area security protection, while IPTF and local police provided local security. SFOR maintained a visible presence in key election areas throughout the polling to ensure a secure environment. SFOR aviation and ground assets continually conducted route reconnaissance and reported on the conditions of all voter routes. As anticipated, voter movement across the Inter-Entity Boundary Line and within the Federation was moderate and largely without incident. SFOR units closely controlled bus movements across the Inter-Entity Boundary Line. SFOR continued to provide security at the two OSCE counting locations during the tabulation process.

25. In terms of logistical support, SFOR's Beluga Group distributed polling material to the Multi-National Division's storage distribution centres, following which the Multi-National Division delivered the materials to the Local Election Commissions who, in turn, delivered them to the approximately 2,300

polling stations. SFOR aircraft also picked up the elections materials during polling days and delivered them to Sarajevo for re-sorting by OSCE election officials. Once sorted, SFOR aircraft delivered them to appropriate OSCE sites in designated cities. After the polling days, SFOR also returned the completed ballots to Sarajevo for counting and storage.

26. During the implementation phase, SFOR will continue to provide a secure environment, providing area security and supporting the IPTF. SFOR is participating fully in the OSCE Election Results Implementation Committees at national and five regional levels. The Committees will monitor the installation of elected candidates and coordinate responses to problems.

27. SFOR has continued to provide data on Entity weapons holdings to the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office under the terms of article IV of the Peace Agreement. SFOR has also assisted in the movement of weapons to reductions sites and has established a direct field level liaison with OSCE weapons experts for the purpose of refining the SFOR cantonment data. During the month of August, following agreement from the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe arms control experts working for OSCE accompanied SFOR during routine cantonment site inspections, with the aim of identifying equipment falling under the terms of the Agreement on Subregional Arms Control and thus obtaining further clarification of discrepancies between SFOR reports and holdings reported by the parties. The Federation willingly accepted this assistance, and SFOR consequently conducted its August Federation inspections accompanied by these experts. Similar inspections in the Republika Srpska have not yet taken place.

28. On 15 September, the Standing Committee on Military Matters met in Sarajevo with President Zubak in the chair. This was the 1st meeting of the Committee since agreement on procedures was reached at the end of August. SFOR was represented by the SFOR Commander and by the Deputy Commander for Operations. The atmosphere was constructive, and outstanding differences on the chairmanship and location of meetings were resolved. The Office of the High Representative agreed to assist the Military Advisors of the Presidents in preparation for the next meeting on 15 October, and on a six-month strategic plan for the Committee. In particular, following short statements from the three Presidents, it was agreed that, at the next meeting, they would take a paper proposing a way ahead on the appointment of defence attachés.

Outlook

29. With the municipal elections now over, SFOR has begun initial planning, in close cooperation with OSCE, for the forthcoming elections in the Republika Srpska.